

**TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
FISCAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**



**FISCAL NOTE**

**HB 3055 - SB 3789**

February 26, 2010

**SUMMARY OF BILL:** Defines the carrying capacity of the Ocoee River between Rogers Branch and Caney Creek to be 4,500 commercial customers on dates which the commercial usage exceeded 4,500 in the previous year. Requires that each date on which the carrying capacity was capped for the last season also be capped on the same date for the next season unless the commercial usage fell below 4,300 customers. Authorizes the Hiwassee/Ocoee Scenic River State Park management to increase the daily commercial carrying capacity at the lower Ocoee River Recreational area up to 500 additional customers to the extent staffing and infrastructure will allow. Requires the Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) to conduct an annual study on the effect of any increased capacity. Requires the cap be lowered to 4,500 if TDEC determines in the study that the river or park cannot sustain an increase. Prohibits a commercial carrier capacity during the three-hour period prior to the end of the scheduled water release for two days during rafting season.

**ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT:**

**Increase State Revenue – Up to \$8,000**

**Increase State Expenditures – Up to \$79,900**

Assumptions:

- According to the TDEC, the state receives \$0.50 per person rafting on the Ocoee River. On 10 days of the year the capacity will be increased by 500 per day. On the two days without capacity limits for three hours, an additional 500 may go rafting. Up to 6,000 additional customers will pay to go rafting on the Ocoee on these 12 days each year. State revenue will increase up to \$3,000 (500 customers x 12 days x \$0.50).
- Park management will have the discretion to increase the capacity by 500 on any other day during the season. It cannot be reasonably determined if park management will need or decide to increase the capacity. If a decision is made to increase capacity on weekends during the season, up to 500 additional customers could pay to go rafting on approximately 20 additional days. The increase to state revenue would be \$5,000 (500 customers x 20 days x \$0.50).
- According to TDEC, increases to the capacity will require additional state park seasonal labor. Two additional seasonal laborers will be needed at \$7.38 per hour for three and one-half months totaling up to \$8,400 per year for full-time employment. One additional seasonal interpretive ranger for \$10 per hour will be needed for four months totaling up to \$6,450 per year for full time employment.

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- The required annual study on the carrying capacity of the river and the impacts of the increased levels of usage would be contracted out at a recurring expenditure up to \$65,000 per year.

**CERTIFICATION:**

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James W. White". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "White".

James W. White, Executive Director

/jaw